

From: [Keith Horn](#)  
To: [Gregory Langley](#)  
Cc: [Gary Fulton](#); [Alan Karr](#); [Little, Bill](#); [Canellas, Bart](#)  
Subject: FW: Devil's Swamp Advisory - Further Information and Clarification from LDHH  
Date: Wednesday, July 22, 2015 3:13:03 PM  
Attachments: [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[DS 1993 adv.pdf](#)

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All:

LDHH has responded to some internal questions from their press liaison who is preparing their draft press release. There is some good information in their responses I want to share with everyone.

***Keith Horn***  
***Staff Environmental Scientist***  
***LDEQ UST and Remediation Division***  
***Desk (225) 219-3793 – NOTE NEW NUMBER***  
***Facsimile (225) 219-3398***



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From: Darcie Olexia  
Sent: Wednesday, July 22, 2015 3:02 PM  
To: John Ford (DHH); Olivia Watkins Hwang; Frank Opelka; Christine Arbo Peck  
Cc: Raoult Ratard; Dianne Dugas; Shannon Soileau; Keith Horn; Bobby Reed; June Sutherlin; lawwhite@tulane.edu  
Subject: RE: Devil's Swamp Advisory

Good Afternoon John,  
Please see below for the additional information that you've requested. Please let me know if you have any further questions.

Best,  
Darcie

1. Who are the EPA site manager and community involvement coordinator?

Bartolome J Cañellas  
EPA Superfund Remedial Project Manager  
214.665.6662 or 1.800.533.3508 (toll-free)  
[Canellas.bart@epa.gov](mailto:Canellas.bart@epa.gov)

Bill Little  
EPA Community Involvement Coordinator/SEE  
214.665.8131 or 1.800.533.3508 (toll-free)  
[Little.bill@epa.gov](mailto:Little.bill@epa.gov)

2. Does the signed advisory need to be posted online anywhere and is that being taken care of?



9600766

SEET staff will update the previous advisory online after officials are informed

<http://dhh.louisiana.gov/index.cfm/page/564>

DEQ also posts the advisories on their website which will also need to be updated

<http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/portal/PROGRAMS/MercuryInitiative/FishConsumptionandSwimmingAdvisories.aspx>

DWF posts the Louisiana Fishing Regulations guide online; a hard copy of the guide is also shared with individuals when they renew their fishing license each year. Page 53 of the guide summarizes the advisory process and provides DHH contact information for those with questions about specific water bodies

[http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/publication/31743-2014-recreational-fishing-regulations/2015\\_recreational\\_fishing\\_low-res.pdf](http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/publication/31743-2014-recreational-fishing-regulations/2015_recreational_fishing_low-res.pdf)

3. The attachment says the update is based on limited sampling data from 2012-2013. Why is the advisory going out now?

The advisory process is highly dependent on the availability of environmental data that meets the criteria of the protocol. Requests for data sampling must be submitted through regulatory agencies and the potentially responsible parties (PRPs), which is a sensitive, time-consuming process. Once PRPs have agreed to meet sampling requests, site sampling plans are generated and submitted for comments to all stakeholders before sampling occurs. Actual sampling (including any delays if specific species are not “catchable”), laboratory analysis of tissues, and quality control processes occur before data analysis and concurrence from the interagency workgroup prior to generating advisories. In the case of Devil’s Swamp, laboratory data was delivered in stages: fish: December 20, 2012; crawfish: November 1, 2013 and August 15, 2014. The draft Tier II Remedial Investigation was delivered December 19, 2014; the PRP provided a response to comments on the draft July 17, 2015.

4. Should people who have eaten fish or crawfish from this area between then and now be concerned?

The advisory is based on long term exposures and a single meal should not cause health symptoms. The advisories are developed to be protective of health and eating fish or crawfish should not cause observable health effects. People are cautioned to observe the advisories to protect public health.

5. What are the symptoms if someone were to become ill due to ingesting contaminated fish from this area?

It is not likely that people will display acute symptoms from ingesting fish from the area. The advisories are based on long term exposure and possible chronic health effects that do not have readily observable symptoms. Individuals with a health problem should see their healthcare provider.

**Mercury** usually causes no symptoms at low levels. However, if high levels of mercury build up in the human body from repeated exposure, they can affect the brain and nerves. In addition, pregnant women are susceptible to mercury by causing effects to the fetus that may result in learning problems and birth defects in their children. Among people of all ages, high mercury levels can cause tingling or numbness in the mouth, hands and feet, and vision and hearing troubles. The primary source of environmental exposure to mercury in the general population is through consumption of contaminated fish. That’s why prevention of mercury build-up in our bodies is so important. Those who should be most careful when eating fish are:

- Children under 7-years old,
- Pregnant women,
- Women who are planning pregnancies,
- Women who are breast-feeding their babies, and
- People who eat a lot of fish over a long time from mercury advisory areas.

Unborn babies and children under 7-years old are at risk because their nervous systems are still forming, and any harm to those systems might be permanent. Pregnant women and women who are nursing their babies should be very careful about eating fish which contain high levels of mercury. Pregnant women can pass mercury from the fish they eat to their unborn babies, and nursing mothers can pass the mercury to their infants through their

breast milk. Adults who have health effects caused by mercury simply can stop eating mercury-contaminated fish, and in most cases their health problems will go away as their bodies slowly get rid of the mercury.

<http://dhh.louisiana.gov/index.cfm/faq/category/39>

**PCBs:**

It is very unlikely that an individual will have any observable, immediate signs from PCBs. Once in the environment, PCBs do not readily break down and therefore may remain for very long periods of time. In water, PCBs may be transported by currents, attach to bottom sediment or particles in the water. PCBs bioaccumulate up the food chain therefore certain species and larger fish and fatty organs will contain higher levels of PCBs. Long-term health effects of PCB exposures can harm brain development in fetuses and children; have been linked to the development of cancer, diabetes and damage to the immune system. However, in the case of the Devil's Swamp advisory, the risk drivers are non-carcinogenic. The advisory process has been developed to be protective of recreation fishers who regularly (weekly) consume from this area; an advisory prevents PCBs from building to levels that could cause health problems.

6. Is the last time an advisory for this area was issued 7/9/93? What was the advisory for that time?

The 7/9/93 advisory recommended 2 8 oz. meals per month (see attached PDF)

7. How common are these types of advisories?

As outlined in the "*Protocol for Issuing Public Health Advisories for Chemical Contaminants in Recreationally Caught Fish and Shellfish*", a consumption advisory is issued when sufficient chemical contamination data exists to support a recommendation to limit the amount of fish and shellfish eaten from a particular water body. When health guidelines are exceeded, restrictions on the amount and type of fish and shellfish eaten are needed to protect human health. There are 58 advisories throughout the state and gulf, the majority of them related to mercury. The advisory process is highly dependent on data availability.

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**From:** John Ford (DHH)

**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 4:43 PM

**To:** Olivia Watkins Hwang; Frank Opelka; Christine Arbo Peck

**Cc:** Darcie Olexia; Raoult Ratard; Dianne Dugas; Shannon Soileau; Keith Horn; Bobby Reed; June Sutherlin;  
[jawhite@tulane.edu](mailto:jawhite@tulane.edu)

**Subject:** RE: Devil's Swamp Advisory

Good afternoon Darcie,

We'll begin working on the release now, but have some questions.

- Who are the EPA site manager and community involvement coordinator?
- Does the signed advisory need to be posted online anywhere and is that being taken care of?
- The attachment says the update is based on limited sampling data from 2012-2013. Why is the advisory going out now?
- Should people who have eaten fish or crawfish from this area between then and now be concerned?
- What are the symptoms if someone were to become ill due to ingesting contaminated fish from this area?
- Is the last time an advisory for this area was issued 7/9/93? What was the advisory for that time?
- How common are these types of advisories?

Olivia may have more questions. Just want to make sure we're ready to answer media inquiries after the release goes out. We'll coordinate with DEQ and DWF as soon as we have the release drafted.

Thank you,

**John Ford**

Press Officer | Bureau of Media and Communications

*Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals*

[jpford@la.gov](mailto:jpford@la.gov)

O: 225-342-9010 | M: 318-447-8663



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**From:** Olivia Watkins Hwang  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 4:23 PM  
**To:** John Ford (DHH)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Devil's Swamp Advisory

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Darcie Olexia <[Darcie.Olexia@LA.GOV](mailto:Darcie.Olexia@LA.GOV)>  
**Date:** July 21, 2015 at 4:06:01 PM CDT  
**To:** Olivia Watkins Hwang <[Olivia.Watkins@LA.GOV](mailto:Olivia.Watkins@LA.GOV)>  
**Cc:** Raoult Ratard <[Raoult.Ratard@LA.GOV](mailto:Raoult.Ratard@LA.GOV)>, Dianne Dugas <[Dianne.Dugas@LA.GOV](mailto:Dianne.Dugas@LA.GOV)>, Shannon Soileau <[Shannon.Soileau@LA.GOV](mailto:Shannon.Soileau@LA.GOV)>, Keith Horn <[Keith.Horn@LA.GOV](mailto:Keith.Horn@LA.GOV)>, Bobby Reed <[breed@wlf.la.gov](mailto:breed@wlf.la.gov)>, June Sutherlin <[June.Sutherlin@LA.GOV](mailto:June.Sutherlin@LA.GOV)>, LuAnn White <[lawhite@tulane.edu](mailto:lawhite@tulane.edu)>  
**Subject:** Devil's Swamp Advisory

Good Afternoon Olivia,

In accordance with the *Protocol for Issuing Public Health Advisories for Chemical Contaminants in Recreationally Caught Fish and Shellfish*", the fish consumption advisory for Devil's Swamp and the Bayou Baton Rouge area (East Baton Rouge Parish) has been drafted, reviewed and submitted for signature to the secretaries (or designated representatives) of the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH), the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), and the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (DWF).

The advisory has been signed by all 3 agencies and now requires that notification be made to local officials to inform them of the findings and the pending issuance of a seafood consumption advisory in their area. Contact information for local officials is listed below. The EPA site manager and community involvement coordinator may have additional points of contact as well. Please also coordinate the release with DEQ and DWF communications departments.

Trae Welch  
B.R. Metropolitan Councilman, District 1  
225-389-5170  
Legislative Asst: Lisa Rioux [lrioux@brgov.com](mailto:lrioux@brgov.com)

Kip Holden  
B.R. Mayor-President  
225-389-3100  
[mayor@brgov.com](mailto:mayor@brgov.com)

Senator Yvonne Dorsey-Colomb

District 14  
225-342-9700  
[dorsey@legis.la.gov](mailto:dorsey@legis.la.gov)

Representative Stephen Carter  
District 68  
225-362-5305  
[carters@legis.la.gov](mailto:carters@legis.la.gov)  
Legislative Aide: Charlotte Gooch

Thank You,  
Darcie

Darcie Olexia  
Environmental Health Scientist  
Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals, Office of Public Health  
Section of Environmental Epidemiology and Toxicology  
Benson Towers  
1450 Poydras St., Ste. 1641  
Phone: (504)568-8146  
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